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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 6th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 10 October 2008, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Argüela (Argentina)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 33: Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations (A/63/23, chaps. VII and XII, and A/63/65)

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Agenda item 37: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (A/63/23 chaps. VIII, IX, X and XII, A/63/23/Add.1 and A/63/131)

1. **Mr. Kapambwe** (Zambia) said that his delegation hoped that the administering Powers would live up to their obligations in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, and that they would accelerate the processes leading to the exercise of self-determination by the people of those Territories.

2. The negotiations in Manhasset regarding Western Sahara had begun with great promise the previous year, but more recently the process appeared to have failed to bring the parties appreciably closer to a resolution. The resulting disappointment, anger and frustration among the people of Western Sahara were reflected in the sentiments of the petitioners who had addressed the Committee. Such sentiments could lead to violence, and the people of Western Sahara had endured enough violence and suffering already. They deserved results from the negotiations, along with the empathy and assistance of the international community and a more active participation by the United Nations in the search for a solution. They were also entitled to the protection of the international community when their human rights were violated. The two parties must expedite their negotiations, but it was also incumbent on the United Nations to insist on progress and to speak out

whenever either side violated the norms or slackened its steps in the peace process.

3. **Mr. Maboundou** (Congo), speaking on a point of order, said that his delegation wished to disassociate itself from the statement on the question of Western Sahara delivered by the representative of Kenya on behalf of the African Group at the previous fifth meeting.

4. **Mr. Mba Meye** (Equatorial Guinea) said that his delegation wished to contribute to finding a peaceful and democratic solution to the thorny problem of Western Sahara. He was nonetheless encouraged by the political process that was taking place and by the initiatives associated with that process, which he hoped, would lead to a definitive resolution of the issue. The entire international community should therefore support the efforts of the United Nations and of the Secretary-General in that regard. His delegation also wished to disassociate itself from the statement delivered by the delegation of Kenya at the previous meeting on behalf of the African Group.

5. **Mr. Ousseini** (Comoros) said that his delegation remained committed to the eradication of colonialism. In the Sahara as elsewhere, armed force and intransigence must give way to the force of belief in the value of negotiation. He welcomed the commitment of the two sides to pursue negotiations and Morocco's serious and credible efforts to bring about a negotiated solution to the conflict. He expressed support for the relevant Security Council resolutions which called on both parties to engage in serious and substantial negotiations. Finally, he supported the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy in their efforts to implement those resolutions and ensure a successful outcome for the negotiations in order to arrive at a fair, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution.

6. **Mr. Malmierca Díaz** (Cuba) said that as the end of the Second Decade approached, many of its objectives remained unfulfilled; the cause of decolonization must continue to be a priority of the United Nations. The efforts of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the good intentions of the vast majority of Member States were by themselves insufficient; the cause of decolonization required the full support of the administering Powers. That some of those Powers continued to refuse to

cooperate with the Committee on Decolonization, and to disregard their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and numerous relevant General Assembly resolutions, was a matter of concern. However, New Zealand provided a positive example of constructive cooperation between an administering Power and the Committee in its handling of the October 2007 referendum in Tokelau and to the entire decolonization process in that Territory.

7. The United States had exercised colonial domination over Puerto Rico for 110 years, but the Puerto Rican people had never ceased their struggle for self-determination. In that regard, the Decolonization Committee had also adopted 27 resolutions on Puerto Rico, and had reiterated its request that the General Assembly should undertake a comprehensive review of the question of Puerto Rico in all its aspects.

8. The United Nations had reaffirmed that the conflict in Western Sahara was a decolonization issue falling within the purview of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). The parties should continue the negotiations begun in 2007 and make efforts to reach a solution compatible with the resolution and with the Charter of the United Nations.

9. He reiterated his delegation's firm support for Argentina in the dispute over the sovereignty of the Malvinas Islands, and called once again for a fair and definitive solution to that question as soon as possible.

10. Cuba saw as its duty the provision of study opportunities for the inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories, and had granted 14 scholarships over the past year in addition to those awarded to the 587 students from those Territories currently studying in Cuba. Other Member States with the ability to do so should join Cuba in providing study and professional training facilities to youth from the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Finally, referring to the Economic and Social Council a resolution submitted on the support for Non-Self-Governing Territories by the specialized agencies and international bodies linked to the United Nations, he noted that those Territories could benefit significantly from the support of such agencies and bodies.

11. **Ms. Graham** (New Zealand) said that her delegation appreciated the effort by members of the Committee to consider the question of Tokelau. However, the people of Tokelau had once again failed to provide sufficient support, in the recent United

Nations-supervised referendum, for a change in status from that of Territory to that of self-government in free association with New Zealand. As a result, the leaders of Tokelau had decided to focus their efforts on enhancement of core services rather than to move quickly to a third self-determination referendum. New Zealand was currently working with Tokelau on a major infrastructure programme to improve educational and health facilities, but of even greater importance was the impending inauguration of a safe and reliable shipping service, for which a purpose-built vessel would be used starting in 2010.

12. New Zealand was committed to providing the people of Tokelau with full preparation for their exercise of their fundamental right to self-determination and welcomed the ongoing interest of the Committee in the situation in Tokelau.

13. **Mr. Sow** (Guinea) said that there was still a need for close and active cooperation among all those involved in the decolonization process in order to find ways and means of effectively implementing the plan of action of the Second Decade. He welcomed the convening of the Pacific regional seminar in Bandung in May 2008 and fully supported the recommendations concerning regional seminars, information campaigns and special mission visits contained in the plan.

14. His delegation was grateful for the close cooperation between the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Commission of the African Union aimed at finding a lasting solution to the question of Western Sahara. The continued participation of the parties in negotiations under the aegis of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General was an encouraging development in the peace process, as was the strengthening of such confidence-building measures as family visits. He also welcomed the willingness of the parties not only to renew negotiations in a spirit of good faith but also to move the process into a more intensive and substantive phase. Furthermore, they should cooperate with the United Nations in implementing the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. The Fourth Committee should also support the new impetus in the negotiations by building on the achievements thus far as well as on the relevant decisions of the Committee on Decolonization and those of the Non-Aligned Movement. Finally, he urged the Secretary-General and his next Personal Envoy to continue their efforts to

arrive at a fair, lasting and mutually acceptable resolution of the question of Western Sahara.

15. **Mr. Abdelaziz** (Egypt), noting that the decolonization process had yet to be completed, reaffirmed the importance of implementing the right to self-determination pursuant to Article 73 of the Charter of the United Nations. In keeping with General Assembly resolution 55/146, declaring the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, the Organization and its Member States should take whatever measures were needed to assist the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories to exercise their right to self-determination.

16. In order to bring about a swift end to colonialism, the Organization should mobilize international public opinion in support of colonial peoples. It should also endeavour to strengthen communication between the General Assembly, the Special Committee, the Human Rights Council, the Department of Public Information and the Department of Political Affairs, with a view to determining the best possible means for those peoples to achieve independence.

17. He called on all administering Powers to provide in a timely manner to the Special Committee comprehensive information on the political, economic and legislative situation in the Territories under their administration, in accordance with Article 73 *e* of the Charter. The right of colonial peoples to manage their natural resources must be reaffirmed and any misuse of those resources by the administering Power should be condemned; the cultural identity of colonial peoples should likewise be protected and preserved.

18. The eradication of colonialism would require further strengthening of the principles of liberty, democracy and equality among nations and an unwavering commitment to the inalienable right of all peoples to self-determination and the end of foreign occupation of their territory, without exception. His delegation would continue to support the efforts to eradicate colonialism.

19. **Mr. Hermida Castillo** (Nicaragua) praised the Special Committee for its dedicated and tenacious efforts to eradicate colonialism and to assist colonial peoples to attain their inalienable rights to self-determination and independence, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). Noting that the recommendations, resolutions and decisions of the Special Committee were vital to the process of self-

determination, he urged the administering Powers to collaborate fully with it so as to fulfil at last the objective of resolution 1514 (XV).

20. Recalling that the Special Committee had reiterated, year after year, the right of the Puerto Rican people to self-determination and independence, he said that Puerto Rico should not continue to be the exception in the decolonization of the Caribbean region. The time had come for the General Assembly to act on the recommendation of the Special Committee and to consider the question of Puerto Rico.

21. His country, as it had always, stood in solidarity with the Saharawi people in their heroic struggle for self-determination and independence. In that regard, he hoped that Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO would continue to negotiate without prior conditions in order to achieve a just and lasting peace in Western Sahara. He also expressed the solidarity with Argentina in respect of the dispute over the sovereignty of the Malvinas Islands.

22. **Mr. Issoze-Ngondet** (Gabon) said that his country remained committed to the principle of multilateralism and to the central role of the United Nations in resolving international problems. However, the Organization needed to redouble its efforts if colonialism were to be completely eradicated by 2011.

23. On the question of Western Sahara, he called for intensified efforts to advance the Manhasset negotiations between the parties, under the auspices of the Secretary-General. In that connection, he welcomed the Moroccan autonomy initiative and Security Council resolution 1754 (2007), which called on the parties to enter into negotiations, with a view to achieving a just and lasting political solution. He called on Member States to redouble their efforts in support of those negotiations in order to ensure their successful conclusion.

24. **Mr. Al-Zayani** (Bahrain) reviewed the resolutions and declarations that had been adopted over the years with a view to ending colonialism. Although the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism had lost momentum, that had not diminished in any way its importance to efforts aimed at ending colonialism.

25. Member States recognized that colonialism hindered international economic cooperation, impeded the social, economic and cultural development of the

peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories and was a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. It was therefore the duty of all States Members to support the Organization's efforts to completely and swiftly eradicate colonialism.

26. **Mr. Sekudo** (Nigeria) said that international commitment to the implementation of the plan of action of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism remained strong. That support should be translated into action in order to ensure that the 16 remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories attained their independence by 2010. Nigeria supported the continued application of the principle of self-determination without conditions to all of the remaining Territories and was opposed to any policy that perpetuated subjugation or sought to thwart the enjoyment of sovereign independence.

27. His delegation was concerned over the slow progress towards a resolution of the question of Western Sahara. While the Government of Algeria was to be commended for granting asylum to Saharan families and individuals displaced by the conflict, such a gesture did not diminish the need to launch the referendum process as expeditiously as possible. In that connection, the African Union had offered to work in concert with the United Nations in order to facilitate the holding of the referendum. He called on the parties to the conflict to negotiate without prior conditions and in good faith in order to achieve a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution.

28. **Mr. Santos** (Timor-Leste) said that United Nations intervention in his country had been decisive in allowing the people of Timor-Leste to exercise their right to self-determination and independence, and the United Nations should uphold the same standard for the people of Western Sahara. Allowing the Saharawi people to exercise their right to self-determination was the only way to resolve the decades-old conflict. Timor-Leste was hopeful that all sides would cooperate fully on the matter with the Secretary-General and his next Personal Envoy, honour their commitments to human rights, and abide by their obligations under international law to release, without further delay, all those held since the start of the conflict.

29. **Mr. Aisi** (Papua New Guinea), speaking on behalf of Fiji, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, said that much remained to be achieved in order to realize the goals of the Second International

Decade. The Committee should therefore continue its work to bring the process of decolonization to a successful conclusion. The delegations on whose behalf he spoke were committed to the fundamental rights of the peoples of the Pacific Territories to self-determination and decolonization, provided that they were in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned and in conformity with the clearly defined principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations. While the issues facing each of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories of the Pacific were unique and complex, territorial size, geographical isolation or limited resources should neither inhibit nor prohibit the peoples of those Territories from exercising their inalienable right to self-determination.

30. Referring to recent concerns expressed by the Governor and Senate President of American Samoa with respect to their limited say in decisions that affected the Territory, he pledged support for the wishes of the people of American Samoa and called on the administering Power to fully address their concerns.

31. Turning to Guam, he pointed out that the exercise of self-determination of the Chamorro people was clearly not a domestic issue, but rather one that was well within the Committee's mandate. He encouraged the Committee to send a visiting mission to the island and requested the administering Power to cooperate with the Committee in addressing the question of self-determination for the people of Guam. The States on whose behalf he spoke commended France's political, economic, social and cultural development initiatives in New Caledonia, and encouraged all stakeholders to contribute to the progress achieved in the efforts to allow the people of New Caledonia to exercise self-determination.

32. On the question of Tokelau, the cooperation of New Zealand with the work of the Committee and its actions in all aspects continued to be a model worthy of emulation by other administering Powers in the area of decolonization. Taking note of the results of the recent referendum, the States concerned fully respected the wishes of the people of Tokelau to defer any further act of self-determination. They also welcomed the establishment and operation of the Tokelau International Trust Fund to support the future development needs of the Territory, and urged Member States and regional and international agencies to

contribute to the Fund, which would provide Tokelau with greatly needed assistance in overcoming challenges posed by its small size, isolation and lack of resources.

33. **Mr. Loayza Barea** (Bolivia), associating himself with the statements made by Mexico on behalf of the Rio Group, Brazil on behalf of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and related States, and Cuba on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, said that a more committed response from administering Powers was needed in order to achieve the decolonization of the Non-Self-Governing Territories; Tokelau was an encouraging example in that regard. He welcomed the role of the Special Committee in providing a forum for joint action on such questions as the Malvinas, with regard to which the applicability of the principle of sovereignty, rather than that of self-determination, had been recognized by the General Assembly. Reiterating his support for Argentine sovereignty over the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands, he expressed the hope that the United Kingdom and Argentina would reach a just, peaceful and lasting solution through constructive dialogue.

34. He reaffirmed his Government's support for the right of the Puerto Rican people to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. In over three decades, very little progress had been made on the question of Western Sahara. Relevant United Nations resolutions provided the necessary framework for the achievement of a just, peaceful and mutually acceptable solution to the last remaining colony in Africa through direct negotiations between the parties.

35. His Government firmly supported the holding by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues of a seminar involving the leading agencies of the United Nations system to consider the impact of the decolonization process on the economic and social situation of indigenous peoples living in Non-Self-Governing Territories.

36. **Mr. Maure** (Mozambique) welcomed the Manhasset talks between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, under the auspices of the United Nations, and encouraged both parties to redouble their efforts in order to reach a long-awaited, mutually acceptable and sustainable solution for the benefit of the Saharawi people.

37. **Mr. Ehouzou** (Benin) said that, even though the Second International Decade was due to end in two years, significant progress on determining the final status of disputed territories could be achieved through increased cooperation between the United Nations, the international community and the relevant parties.

38. Western Sahara remained a source of serious concern for his delegation, which was especially concerned over information in the Secretary-General's report concerning human rights violations. He called upon both parties to spare no effort to alleviate the suffering of the populations affected by that situation. Indeed, they should enhance their cooperation with the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and with each other in order to strengthen humanitarian programmes and confidence-building measures. He also welcomed the ongoing work of the United Nations, and, in particular, the Secretary-General, towards reaching a just, lasting and mutually acceptable settlement that took into account the will of all the people concerned. He also urged the parties to show flexibility in order to end the current political impasse. The progress made since 2006 through direct talks at Manhasset gave reason to hope that parties' differences could be overcome.

39. **Ms. Nduko Booto** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that her Government's position on the thorny question of Western Sahara remained the same: the parties to the conflict should reach a just, lasting and mutually acceptable solution enabling the self-determination of the people of that Territory, within the framework of the long-standing United Nations efforts to assist them to do so. Full cooperation with the Organization by the parties and the States of the region was essential. The Moroccan initiative for negotiating an autonomy statute for the Saharan region had created new dynamics and her Government welcomed the serious and credible efforts by Morocco to reach an acceptable settlement. Her delegation would support any impartial consensus resolution that, recognizing the Security Council's central role, supported the three latest Security Council resolutions and opposed outside interference with the ongoing negotiations between the parties.

40. **Mr. Kafando** (Burkina Faso) said that his delegation was not aware of any common African Group position on the question of Western Sahara and could not associate itself with any statement in that regard on its behalf. While he welcomed the relative

calm that currently reigned in Western Sahara, the current impasse was to the detriment of both parties, and inflicted great suffering on the civilian population.

41. Various thoughtful solutions had been proposed, and the pragmatic Moroccan initiative provided a solid point of departure for negotiation, within the framework of Security Council resolution 1813 (2008). His delegation favoured dialogue between the parties as the only way to reach a lasting solution to the conflict. In that connection, he welcomed the direct negotiations held at Manhasset in 2007 and 2008 and urged the international community, especially the countries of the subregion, to support the parties in that process. Lastly, he commended the efforts of the Secretary-General and MINURSO towards achieving peace and stability in Western Sahara and throughout the region.

42. **Mr. Cabral** (Guinea-Bissau) said that, as the representative of a country that had fought for its independence, he firmly believed that all peoples had the right to freely choose their political future. However, one party's interests should not take precedence over those of the other party. The Committee must engage in constructive dialogue in order to find lasting solutions acceptable to all, and must not be selective in its efforts to implement the resolutions that provided the framework for negotiation on the question of Western Sahara, namely, Security Council resolutions 1783 (2007), 1754 (2007) and 1813 (2008).

43. Western Sahara was particularly important to Africans; all Africans were to some extent victims of globalization and the scourge of underdevelopment, challenges that must be confronted together. Account must be taken of the progress already made and of constructive proposals for further action. In that regard, he welcomed the innovative solutions proposed by the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy, Peter von Walsum. Through careful deliberation and perseverance, the Committee would fulfil its obligation to reach a consensus on the question of Western Sahara and adopt a resolution that reflected the wide range of views on the issue, and, in so doing, make an important contribution to the peace process.

44. **Mr. Benmihidi** (Algeria) said that Algeria's long struggle for its own independence had led it to stand in solidarity with the right of all other peoples under colonial domination to decide their own future, and had

made it champion the cause of justice over the use of force. Referring to Western Sahara, the last bastion of colonialism in Africa, he observed that Algeria had for more than three decades borne witness to the consequences of that Territory's military occupation, and had advocated its people's legitimate right to self-determination in keeping with international law. It had always supported the rapprochement of the two parties, Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, through direct negotiations, having participated in all the United Nations processes and initiatives to reconcile the Saharawi and Moroccan peoples. The resumption in April 2007 of negotiations on the basis of the respective proposals put forward by the two parties had given rise to a new hope for a just and final solution, especially since Security Council resolution 1754 (2007) which, *inter alia*, urged them to negotiate frankly and without preconditions, had specifically acknowledged the right to self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. Algeria, anxious to help break the impasse in the peace process for which Morocco had been solely responsible, had agreed to participate as an observer in the ensuing rounds of Manhasset negotiations. It had argued for a fresh definition of the framework for the talks and their agenda, with the mediation of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General.

45. Over the course of the talks, the Frente POLISARIO had called for the unrestricted exercise of the right of the Saharawi people to self-determination, without prejudging the outcome, while Morocco had wanted its proposal for autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty validated from the outset as the only basis for negotiations, which obviously meant prejudging the outcome. By so doing, Morocco was once again failing to honour its commitments to cooperate in the implementation of the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and was giving a unilateral interpretation to the principle of self-determination by refusing to agree to a free and just referendum in which autonomy would be one option among others.

46. For 33 years the Territory of Western Sahara had not been under the rule of law. As the negotiations took their course, it was only fair that the people of the occupied Territory should enjoy adequate international protection from the repression that had been attested to by the independent press and major non-governmental organizations. The wall of silence surrounding the

Territory must be broken, and there must be free access to the Territory and its population by journalists, parliamentarians and humanitarian organizations. Furthermore, the Saharawi refugees living in Algeria's territory should stop being used as political pawns and should receive more humanitarian assistance from the international community.

47. Now more than ever, all should support the negotiating process, and the international community must search for a solution that reconciled rather than opposed international law principles and objective facts like the existence of the Saharawi people.

48. The fifth round of negotiations was being delayed because one of the two parties had not yet approved the designation of a new Special Envoy. Reaching a negotiated settlement would certainly not be an easy task, given the bitterness and complexity of the conflict. It was up to the international community to help to create the necessary climate of confidence by adopting a decision that paved the way for a mutually acceptable solution that comprised the right to self-determination, as it had done in the past.

49. **Mr. Sahel** (Morocco) said that his delegation wished to disassociate itself from the statement delivered by the representative of Kenya on behalf of the African Group at the previous meeting. Once again the Committee was being asked to debate a question which, but for outside interference born of regional rivalries, would have no place on its agenda. He drew attention to a memorandum outlining the history of the conflict that his delegation had just distributed to delegations. He would speak only of recent developments, in the interests of allowing the Committee to reach an objective judgment on the progress made and the continuing obstacles to a settlement of that regional dispute, which was seriously jeopardizing efforts to establish peace, cooperation and solidarity in a Maghreb that would be free of terrorism and able to deal credibly with its regional and international partners.

50. Aimed at breaking the impasse, Morocco's initiative regarding an autonomy statute for the Saharan region — described as credible in Security Council resolution 1754 (2007) — had put forward a new approach based on negotiation, good faith and the will to advance towards a mutually acceptable political settlement. The Moroccan initiative envisaged a form of self-determination and, as underlined in resolution

62/116, all available options for self-determination were valid as long as they were in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned. Morocco of course intended, after negotiations, to submit its initiative to the people for approval. It would be recalled that the forward-looking consensus resolution 62/116 had made no reference to any earlier settlement plans, which had all shown their limitations; and that by endorsing resolution 1754 (2007), the General Assembly was now in step with the Security Council as to the true nature of the issue and the means of resolving it.

51. The fresh impetus generated by the Moroccan proposal had led to four rounds of negotiations and three successive Security Council resolutions, all of which had underscored Morocco's serious efforts to end the dispute and the inclusive, democratic and transparent way in which it had elaborated its autonomy initiative in cooperation with national stakeholders and the different components of the population of the Saharan region; and the need for realistic substantive negotiations in a spirit of compromise. Realism had been the touchstone of the Secretary-General's previous Special Envoy, and it had been an approach validated and endorsed by the Secretary-General in his report S/2008/251. The Special Envoy had subsequently presented to the Security Council an assessment of his three years of mediation after four rounds of negotiations, with intellectual honesty and moral integrity; he had concluded that the option of Saharan independence was unrealistic and that insisting on that option as a precondition for negotiations would inevitably lead to an impasse. Following the Special Envoy's statement, the Security Council had adopted resolution 1813 (2008), calling for realism and a spirit of compromise.

52. Under the circumstances, it was difficult to understand the obstructionist attitude of certain parties towards the Special Envoy and why they had begun to denigrate him. By so doing they had deliberately closed the door to a promising possibility of settlement that would have relieved the suffering of the population languishing in the Tindouf camps. He urged the international community to maintain the momentum of the negotiations on the Moroccan initiative and consolidate the progress made. That initiative still offered a real opportunity to close the case once and for all and usher in a spirit of reconciliation, cooperation and solidarity in the

Maghreb. Morocco's sincere readiness to negotiate was, of course, dependent on the readiness of the other parties, especially Algeria, to act constructively and build, with Morocco, a partnership based on the links uniting their two people.

53. **Mr. Shepard** (United Kingdom), speaking in exercise of the right of reply to Cuba's statement, said that his Government's position on the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) was well known. The United Kingdom had no doubt of its sovereignty over the Islands and there could be no negotiations on sovereignty unless the Islanders so wished.

54. **Mr. Malmierca Diaz** (Cuba) said that his Government had taken a clear position in the sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas Islands (Falklands), and that they were part of the territory of Argentina. Cuba called for just negotiations that would respect both Argentina's territorial integrity and the interests of the Islanders.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.